

# The Gillingham Manual

Remedial Training for Students with Specific Disability  
in Reading, Spelling, and Penmanship

Anna Gillingham and Bessie W. Stillman

This classic in the field of specific language disability has now been completely revised and updated. While the principles and techniques of the Gillingham method remain unchanged, **the manual is now more readable and easier to use. It is also more appropriate for older students and adults as well as for younger children.**

The Gillingham method may be used with individuals or small groups. In this multisensory phonics technique, students first learn the sounds of letters, and then build these letter-sounds into words. Students use visual, auditory, and kinesthetic associations to help themselves remember the concepts in three different ways: for example, if their visual memory of a letter is weak, the feel of writing the letter or saying it aloud can assist their recall.

The manual covers reading and spelling (including a history of the English language that helps explain some of the curious spellings and pronunciations), training for older students, acquiring familiarity with sound symbols (letters and letter combinations), spelling patterns and generalizations, handwriting, and dictionary technique. **Throughout, the language of the book has been updated** while retaining the important components of the Gillingham method.

**The Appendix has been greatly expanded.** While the original activities for auditory training and sound-symbol association remain, the **Appendix now includes many helpful resources for the teacher.** Tests for assessing reading and spelling ability and phonemic awareness, a list of phonograms and their key words, letter formation charts, and a list of further reading are some of the contents of the new Appendix.

**The index has been fully revised and updated to make locating information easier.** A glossary of Orton-Gillingham terms and a guide to pronunciation

symbols used in the manual provide further assistance. This edition of the manual conforms to the system of pronunciation symbols used in the tenth edition of *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*.

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## How the Gillingham Method Evolved

Approximately one child in ten fails to learn to read, write, or spell satisfactorily. The failure is often not due to lack of intelligence or effort on the child's part, but to a specific language disability. Children with this disability frequently become confused and frustrated when taught by traditional methods.

Dr. Samuel Orton, a neurologist and researcher in the field of language function, extensively studied the learning problems of children with reading disabilities. Working closely with Dr. Orton, Anna Gillingham developed and tested remedial techniques to use with these children. After careful evaluation, she described her method and teaching techniques along with appropriate resource information in what has become known as the Gillingham Manual.

### How the Gillingham Method Is Used

For many years, the Gillingham method has been used in language clinics associated with schools, universities, and hospitals throughout the country. Reading specialists and remedial teachers have used the program in special classes and for individual tutoring. The method has also been adapted for the classroom to prevent reading disabilities from developing. It has also been used successfully with illiterate adults.

### The Technique of the Gillingham Method

This is a simple approach to phonics (alpha-phonetic). The Gillingham technique is to teach the letters and then build these letter-sounds into words. This technique is based on the close association of visual, auditory, and kinesthetic elements, forming what is sometimes called the "language triangle."

### Grade Levels for Using the Manual

The techniques in the manual are organized with two types of students in mind: first, remedial students who have been attempting to read and failing for several years; second, prereaders with the characteristics of potential disability. The latter group forms the preventive program.

The procedures in the manual are detailed for grades three to six. Earlier grades can be taught by adapting these techniques. Special programs for reteaching older students and adults are given more attention in this revised edition. The method is similar to that used with younger students, but proceeds faster and is more comprehensive.

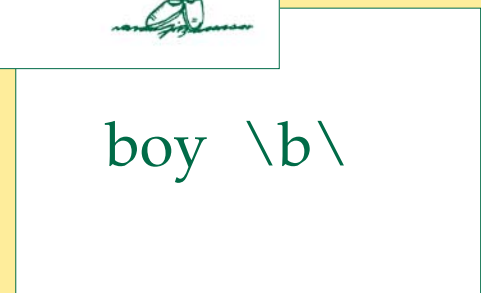
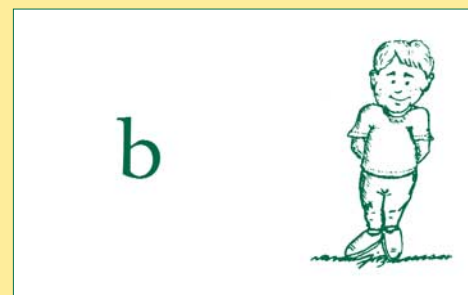
### Supplementary Materials

**Phonics Drill Cards:** The Phonics Drill Cards are organized into three sets of separately numbered cards, each set designated by a color: white indicates consonant phonograms; salmon indicates vowel phonograms; and yellow indicates sound symbols for spelling.

The consonant and vowel phonograms are introduced in a structured order that follows the Gillingham Manual's teaching sequence. Each phonogram is

taught through a multisensory process of visual, auditory, and kinesthetic associations. As the visual stimulus for an oral response, the phonogram is learned by the pronunciation of the key word to initiate the sound. The word and the sound symbol of the phonogram are printed on the back of the card. The phonogram (with or without a picture of the key word) is printed on the front of the card. The student learns to write the phonogram first by tracing, then by copying, and finally by writing it from memory. With these cards, the student is able to build a word that he or she has learned by repeating its series of sound units.

To aid in spelling, the teacher uses a sequence of yellow cards, each of which has the sound symbol printed on the front. The teacher pronounces the sound, and the student names the letter or letters that spell the sound. The response and key word are found on the back of the card.



Phonics Drill Cards (with pictures) : actual size is 3 x 5 inches

One pack of Drill Cards is recommended for each student.

**There are now two sets of Drill Cards:**

- one set with pictures of the key words;
- one set without pictures.

The majority of the non-picture cards are unchanged, though some of the key words have been revised and updated to follow the new manual.

Teachers who already have a set of the 7th edition cards may order a group of just those cards that have new key words, which they may then insert into their 7th edition card decks, discarding the cards with old key words. This will enable them to have the current key words without having to buy a brand-new pack of cards. This group of 26 cards is the Phonics Drill Cards Update Deck.

**Phonetic Word Cards:** Basic to the Gillingham method is the 565-card "Jewel Case" (as a student affectionately named it), containing 43 groups of phonic sounds. The Jewel Case remains unchanged. Single words and detached syllables are used to exemplify the important patterns and generalizations found in reading and spelling. The groups can be classified into six categories, each designated by a color.

**Buff:** One-syllable words of vowel-consonant-vowel combinations, initial and final blends, and vowel-silent E combinations.

**Pink:** Three-letter detached syllables to be learned as an aid to pronouncing difficult words that contain these syllables.

**Blue:** Syllabified words to exemplify pronunciation and spelling rules.

**Buff:** One-syllable words containing a vowel followed by two consonants to emphasize pronunciation of the long vowel sound.

**Blue:** Syllabified words to illustrate the common endings.

**Pink:** Detached syllables containing blends to be learned as an aid to pronouncing difficult words.

One box of Phonetic Word Cards is recommended for each student.

**Little Stories:** This material consists of a series of phonetic stories that the student can begin reading as soon as he or she has mastered a few basic principles. The stories are divided into four groups, each successive group containing both previously learned and new material.

**Group I:** Single consonants, long and short vowel sounds.

**Group II:** Consonant blends added.

**Group III:** Silent final E added.

**Group IV:** Hard and soft C and G and diphthongs added.



**Phonetic Word Cards: actual size is 2 3/4 x 4 inches**

Selections from the stories are also printed in the Gillingham Manual. Nonphonetic words that the student is not expected to know are underlined; the teacher should explain them before the student attempts to read the story.

*The Tea Cup Whale* is also available.